

Hi my name is Charlie Neiss and this is the 8th principle minute.

Unitarian Universalists around the country have committed to dismantling racism beginning with their own practices, their identity and their own stories.

We began our journey towards adopting our 8th principle in the midst of a pandemic, now approaching its first anniversary. In adopting this principle we will be committing to build a beloved community, supported by the twin pillars of economic and social justice. We know that systemic racism perpetuates class differentiation so that Black people are more likely than white people to be in the lower tiers of society in terms of income and wealth and the power that comes with them. Addressing systemic racism requires addressing this disparity as a matter of morality. Economic and social justice are also necessary for the health of individuals in a society. We have seen over the past year the racially disparate impacts of the pandemic on BIPOC members of our society; Black people are three times as likely to be hospitalized and twice as likely to die of COVID-19 than white people. Similarly, Latinx persons are over three times more likely to be hospitalized and Native Americans almost four times as likely as white people, with both groups being over twice as likely to die from this disease. But this is nothing new. Studies over the past 40 years have shown that social class and heart disease are directly related, with mortality rising in the working class, while remaining stable among professionals. With the imbalance by race across economic class, this change has had a disproportionate impact on BIPOC communities. Healthcare is a human right and access to quality healthcare should not be determined by race.

If we add the 8th principle to the 7, we need to look at our own practices, identity, and stories with a new lens to dismantle the racism in ourselves and our institutions. Together we will continue to educate ourselves and discuss what it means to develop a culture of being accountably anti-racist.